



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS
FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 739
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
<http://lachildrenscommission.org>**

Monday, June 20, 2016

10:00 AM

AUDIO FOR THE ENTIRE MEETING. (16-3206)

Attachments: [AUDIO](#)

Present: Commissioner Genevra Berger, Commissioner Carol O. Biondi, Commissioner Patricia Curry, Commissioner Wendy Garen, Commissioner Sydney Kamlager, Commissioner John Kim, Vice Chair Jacquelyn McCroskey and Vice Chair Wendy B. Smith

Absent: Commissioner Maria Brenes, Commissioner Candace Cooper, Commissioner Liz Seipel, Commissioner Janet Teague and Chair Sunny Kang

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Call to Order. (16-2974)

Vice Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. and noted a lack of quorum. Commissioners Kim and Kamlager joined the meeting after the call to order, establishing a quorum of members in attendance.

2. Introduction of meeting attendees. (16-2975)

Self-introductions were made.

3. Approval of the minutes from the June 6, 2016 meeting. (16-2976)

This item was tabled to allow a quorum of members to be established. After a quorum was established, on motion of Commissioner Kim, seconded by Commissioner Garen, this item was approved.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

II. REPORTS

4. Chair's Report. (16-1869)

Vice Chair Wendy B. Smith reported the following:

- **Public Comment Forms are available and should be completed and submitted by attendees who would like to address the Commission;**
- **A pink sheet is being circulated for Commissioners to indicate their availability to attend Commission meetings scheduled for August 2016; and**
- **Video footage of a physical altercation between a Probation youth and Probation staff has gained recent media attention. An investigation is underway. The footage and an associated article will be forwarded to the Commission. This incident will be monitored by the Special Populations Committee.**

5. Report by Philip L. Browning, Director, Department of Children and Family Services. (16-2977)

Brandon Nichols, Chief Deputy, DCFS, reported the following on behalf of Philip L. Browning, Director, DCFS, who is in Sacramento in meetings regarding Continuum of Care Reform:

- **On June 20, 2016, Los Angeles County held its first Foster Youth Shadow Day. Approximately 30 foster youth were paired with County employee mentors from over 10 participating departments. The foster youth shadowed their mentors as they performed their daily tasks. This program is modeled after Congresswoman Bass' program, which has been successful for five years in Washington, D.C.;**
- **Unfortunately, the Emergency Childcare bill for this year is dead. DCFS will be launching a pilot child care program at the Van Nuys office to demonstrate the impact of emergency childcare. The findings from this pilot this will be included as evidence in next year's bill presentation;**
- **Celebration 2016, which honored approximately 175 High School Graduates recently took place. Approximately one million dollars in scholarships was awarded; and**

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- **The San Gabriel Tribune featured a positive and heartfelt article regarding a gentleman who has been a foster parent for over 50 years. Despite many challenges, he has demonstrated unconditional love and fostered over 40 children, adopting seven (7). His first adopted child is now 53 years old.**

III. PRESENTATIONS

6. Background: Commission for Children & Families' Work on Prevention

- Commissioner Trish Curry (16-2978)

Vice Chair McCroskey introduced the item and presented the following:

- **A Children's Data Network report linked the birth records of children in California with child welfare records. It was found that 15% of children in California were reported to child welfare before the age of five (5). Los Angeles County had similar numbers. These rates are high;**
- **We are not doing what needs to be done at the front end of the system to strengthen families and build community supports for children and families;**
- **There is significant variation in reports to child welfare by geographic area. Babies born in the Antelope Valley had the highest rate at 21% and West Los Angeles had the lowest at 8%;**
- **In 2003-2004, under the lead of then DCFS Director David Sanders, the Children's Planning Council undertook an extensive process through which meetings were convened with many stakeholders to discuss prevention;**
- **The two (2) year study found that everyone sees only a piece of the picture and we do much less about building community supports for families than we do about responding once those calls come to the hotline;**
- **The study led to a two (2) part Board motion about prevention. One part required DCFS to create the Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP) and the second part required the CEO to convene other county departments to build around PIDP.**

Vice Chair McCroskey presented Children's Data Network "Snapshots" and encouraged everyone to view the interactive material online. The

“Snapshots” provide a wealth of information about what’s happening in LA County, what families want and need.

Commissioner Curry provided an overview of the Commission’s involvement in prevention over the years and presented the following timeline:

- **2004, Board motion by Supervisor Knabe and Supervisor Yaroslavsky to form a Prevention Committee;**
- **2009, PIDP Year One evaluation was positive, and found that PIDP added value in key areas;**
- **2010, PIDP Year Two evaluation identified several significant gains, and found that PIDP continued to make a difference;**
- **2011, Vice Chair McCroskey and others presented on the PIDP evaluations and program success to the Commission;**
- **Commissioners were disappointed to learn that there would be no continued funding of PIDP. The Commission expressed these concerns in a letter to the Board and in the 2010-11 Annual Report. The Commission continued to have representation on the Prevention Committee;**
- **2013, Board Deputies asked the Commission to present at the cluster meeting. The Commission focused on the barriers to successful prevention initiatives, including the lack of central coordination or dedicated entity with full authority to organize, oversee, and integrate the services and funds from various county departments;**
- **The Commission recommended using existing resources and integrating services better. Service integration should be seamless;**
- **Each County department has a strategic plan, but no efforts were made to get them to include prevention and coordinate;**
- **For example, even though the Department of Mental Health has Prevention and Early Intervention funds from the Mental Health Services Act, there was no planning or coordination with prevention;**
- **2014, The Commission’s prevention report was presented to the Blue**

Ribbon Commission on Child Protection;

- **Since then, the Commission has met with Board Offices, Deputies and First 5 LA on how they can all work together on prevention;**
- **As of May 2016, 11,400 or 39.2 % of children in the DCFS system are under the age of four (4);**
- **The Commission has spent a great deal of time talking to First 5 LA, who has Welcome Baby, Best Start, and other programs could help with these young children; and**
- **Vice Chair McCroskey, Commissioner Kim, and Commissioner Curry are members of the Office of Child Protection's Prevention group.**

7. Prevention Needs by Zip Code

- **Commissioner John Kim, Executive Director, Advancement Project (16-2979)**

Vice Chair McCroskey introduced Commissioner Kim and his work at the Advancement Project and stated that they have collected essential data to kick off a new round of activities.

Commissioner Kim thanked Vice Chair McCroskey and Commissioner Curry and stated that it is important for new Commissioners to understand the history and presented the following:

- **Some of the work on prevention was conducted through his role as Executive Director of the Advancement Project (AP). The research team was led by Dr. Darlene Neal of AP. Commissioners are advised to contact her if they have any detailed research questions;**
- **Early on we determined that we should understand that geography as it relates to prevention, as level of need in the County is uneven;**
- **Not every neighborhood and zip code have the same needs and we need to understand that we may have slim resources and deal with those resources appropriately in highest needs zip codes;**
- **Highest needs neighborhoods are different from one another. No one solution will solve all problems;**

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- A literature review was conducted and spoke to the need for family strengthening, with recognition of various dynamics among families as they relate to prevention needs and the needs of communities, e.g., what the community needs to look like and what kind of community we want to live in; and
 - AP was asked to conduct this research because of its past work, particularly its work to help the City of Los Angeles and Los Angeles Police Department reduce gang violence. The AP conducted similar analysis of gang violence and associated prevention needs. A public health approach to the issue was successful in reducing gang related violence.

Commissioner Kim referenced charts and maps on pages 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12 of the report.

- He noted that the prevention dynamics considered during the analysis included:
 - o Family strengthening;
 - o Community conditions; and
 - o Community belonging and participation. The community must be actively involved and engaged in designing and implementing interventions.
 - o The research focused on eight (8) key data indicators that were identified early on and examined at the zip code level. They included:
 - o The number of children referred to DCFS, child maltreatment related crimes reported, rates of people moving, affordability of housing, access to early care and education, access to other types of services and supports, such as CalWORKS.

Questions asked as part of the analysis included:

- o What is the community's capacity to help prevent maltreatment; and
 - o Where is maltreatment happening?
- Zip codes were ranked. Some high need zip codes are familiar to

people who've been doing this type of work, such as South LA and some Antelope Valley zip codes.

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Commissioner Kim advised that the project looked at the needs for services that includes the absence of existing services and general need. The final report will have a methodology section.

Commissioner Kim added that this should not end the conversations, but should start them. Communities should remain engaged throughout the implementation phase to keep us accountable. Also, we need to understand the dynamics of race and culture; In order to be serious about disproportionality, you have to be serious about prevention.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

8. Prevention and Aftercare Networks

- Marilynne Garrison, Division Chief, Community-Based Support Division, Department of Children & Family Services
- Susan Kaplan, Executive Director, Friends of the Family (16-2980)

Chair McCroskey introduced the item and noted that in 2007, DCFS started investing in prevention. The Commission's effort to keep up investment in prevention has worked and continues.

Marilynne Garrison, Division Chief, DCFS, stated that DCFS is using data, collaborating and focusing on prevention differently.

Ms. Garrison presented the following information:

- **With the implementation of the PIDP contracts in 2008, DCFS adopted a new approach to prevention work using Title IV-E funds to help families directly through eight (8) PIDP networks;**
- **PIDP is based on a hypothesis that child neglect and abuse can be reduced if families are less isolated, able to access the support they need at the time that they need it, and have access to resources to improve their economic stability;**
- **Core values that drive DCFS' work and focusing efforts:**
 - o **Community capacity building;**
 - o **Integration and alignment of services; and**

o **Inter-departmental collaboration.**

- **DCFS expects to see incremental decreases in rates of maltreatment and increases in family well-being;**
- **DCFS has a core group of contractors who are committed to engaging communities and building strong, supportive safety nets around families in their service areas; and**
- **DCFS has established an infrastructure in Los Angeles county.**

Ms. Garrison introduced Susan Kaplan, Executive Director, Friends of the Family, a DCFS Prevention and Aftercare Services provider.

Ms. Kaplan presented the following:

- **PIDP was originally funded as a 15-month project, but the first year's results were so promising that it was renewed until the end of 2014;**
 - **Important lessons learned through PIDP were integrated into DCFS' Prevention and Aftercare Services contracts.**
 - **In the past, families that were having some challenges, but "kind of looked okay" would always get less constrained supports and the families that looked highly chaotic always got mental health, domestic violence, and substance abuse interventions. There was no chance that these families received other kinds of interventions, such as connection to social supports in the community to decrease social isolation or economic interventions to help them stabilize their economic situation; and**
 - **Important to cross walk the ethnic/racial analysis with the economic analysis because high incidents of maltreatment can occur across all ethnicities.**
- o **PIDP served to expand the definition of partnership and collaboration beyond efforts of the County's interdepartmental collaboration. Integrated into the current Prevention and Aftercare program are some fundamental precepts that indicate the solution must match the problems and issues. Prevention and Aftercare is serving to broaden the responses to impact problems. Counseling helps with a lot of things, but does not help with economic stability;**

- o Look into zip codes and particular neighborhoods and housing complexes where DCFS saw high rates of child maltreatment, reliance on government benefits, teen pregnancies, gang involvement, etc. To some degree, this is all about a place based strategies, which require help from local implementers and advocates to ensure sustainability over time;
- Moved towards adaptive services and funding community developers to engage people who are interested in network building, community organizing, and parent engagement and have a commitment to a common set of desired conditions for children and families; Those desired conditions are rooted in increasing protective factors;
- In 2013, there was a rebid of the community based contracts to include approximately \$8 million to fund prevention and aftercare services in the County. Eight (8) SPA based and two (2) countywide networks of agencies were chosen out, each having a lead anchor agency that will keep moving forward this adaptive view in the County;
- Friends of the Family is the lead agency for the network in SPA 2 and is but one example of 10 extraordinary LA County Prevention and Aftercare networks;
- Another great example is the commitment to learning and to a shared set of theories of change and responses based on the following:
 - o Current emergent information on early brain development;
 - o How do we develop social attachment?; and
 - o How do we truly enhance protective factors and community capacity to self-care and self-manage?;
- The lead agency can create a network inclusive of a range of entities with some in the social service sector and some not. There are some social services sector entities that are so grassroots and so small that the county can never contract with those entities directly or on their own, but through this network notion, they are able to bring in the kind of organizations that create infrastructure for the work that's being done; and
- Creating that infrastructure and recognizing the importance of the anchor agencies enables the robust network partners to work together

to contribute to the community culture that supports and sustains health and wellbeing for everyone.

Ms. Garrison presented the following:

- There is a lot of innovative work being done through these networks. 10% of the dollars that fund agencies are allocated as County Discretionary Funds. Through these funds, DCFS has input with their respective agencies on projects they feel would most benefit their client population. Through this process, there has been a deepening of partnership and relationship with DCFS offices.

Ms. Garrison highlighted the networks on pages 9-35 of the supporting document, which includes network activities, network partners, and projects through County Directed Funds.

- Clients are referred to these agencies through self-referrals, or referrals from DCFS, schools, hospitals, law enforcement, etc;
- Agencies will assess the needs of the family and develop an individualized service plan for them, linking them to the most supportive resources within their network; and
- Agencies are able to provide an array of services within their own network. Not only achieved through their subcontractors, but through the relationships that they have built with other community agencies, such as, school systems, legal services, early care and education programs, health and mental health organizations, youth programs, employment development programs, etc.

In response to questions posed by the Commission regarding how much homelessness is seen within these families or the risk of homelessness, Ms. Kaplan stated that severe economic distress plays a part in every family situation. She currently does not have the statistics, but would estimate about 15-20% in DCFS offices are struggling, either about to be evicted, or in mobile homes situations at the moment.

Vice Chair McCroskey added that they have been trying to get a handle on what is actually involved in these networks. A next step would be looking at what the people that have been involved within these neighborhoods see, as well as multiple issues coming up differently or the same in different places.

9. County-wide Prevention Plan

- Judge Michael Nash, Director, Office of Child Protection
- John Wagner, Chief Operating Officer, First 5 LA (16-2982)

Judge Michael Nash, Director, Office of Child Protection (OCP), stated that the Blue Ribbon Commission on Child Protection (BRCCP) report recommended there be a child welfare prevention plan developed and led by Department of Public Health (DPH) and First 5 LA.

Judge Nash presented the following:

- **He came onboard in January 2016;**
- **One of the top priorities was to develop a countywide prevention plan; this means working with others to ensure an array of services is available and accessible to communities to prevent families from coming into contact with the child welfare system and limit their involvement with the system;**
- **He did his own research and investigation that included review of all supporting documents associated with the BRCCP final report. A Commission report on prevention included brief discussion of PIDP;**
- **Through review of the PIDP evaluations, he became aware of Vice Chair McCroskey's involvement. PIDP is something that had been in existence that was designed to do exactly what OCP is here for. Prevention is not owned by any one County department and we need to do a better job of bringing other people to the table to work on this issue;**
- **Each agency, whether private sector or the County, has their own set of networks already doing some type of prevention; and**
- **Questions to be asked when developing a County-wide prevention plan include:**
 - o **Do all networks know about each other and what they do?**
 - o **Are they communicating, cooperating, or operating in silos?**
- **The initial task in developing the prevention plan is to identify networks and determine what are they doing, where, and to what extent they are communicating with other networks.**

Judge Nash stated that this is a big project. They will map out what exists and what is missing in different areas. He indicated that this is going to take some time, bringing this together is a large effort by OCP.

Judge Nash questioned how to ensure that we are getting services to people in various communities and stated that at the end of the day the question is going to be how do we truly operationalize all this? He does not have all the answers, but will push for them.

Vice Chair McCroskey stated that because Commissioner Kim, Commissioner Curry, and First 5 LA came to the table right away, the Committee thought it was useful to get a sense of what First 5 LA has going on at the moment and lessons learned from their work that might be beneficial and work well with this effort.

John Wagner, Chief Operating Officer, First 5 LA, stated that they focused on their mission, which is to have all children that enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and in life. Mr. Wagner stated that there is an ability to do a lot of cross pollination with much of this work and it should be no surprise that a significant portion of First 5 LA's work involves an investment in prevention.

- The research shows that when you invest in strengthening families in communities that value children and families, child abuse and neglect, decreases significantly;
- Ways First 5 LA helps to make critical connections:
 - o Welcome Baby Select Home Visitation is a free hospital and homebased intervention program opened to all pregnant and post-partum women who give birth at one of the participating hospitals. It piloted in 2009, expanded to additional sites in 2013, and fully operationalized in 14 hospitals across the County in 2014. These are hospitals connected to or near First 5 LA's Best Start Communities;
 - o First 5 LA will be funding over \$40 million across the County in 2016. They are the largest funder of home visitation in the State and possibly in the nation- Federal funding is \$22.6 million for the entire state of California. This is an example of how First 5 LA's investment in home visitation is a very critical and early touch point for this population. It provides assessment and connection to needed services and support;

- o **First 5 LA also funded Best Start, a place based investment. First 5 LA recognized the critical role parents play in successful outcomes for children. It is a way for parents to become more informed and mobilized around child welfare and child related issues across the 14 Best Start communities. First 5 LA's board passed the budget to fund Best Start at \$18.8 million this year;**
- o **First 5 LA currently engages parents in the 14 Best Start communities in a survey to find out ways in which they access resources and supports to ensure parents' voices are taken into account and factored in as recommendations move forward. Resources are typically obtained through local trusted informal networks and not always through official government run or funded networks. Critical to moving forward in prevention is understanding that they might be entrance points of first contact and it is really critical that we figure out how to better utilize those informal networks;**
- o **Parent engagement is one of the key emerging recommendations from the survey. First 5 LA was able to host two (2) convening meetings with parents to hear firsthand what is leading to the high number of referrals to the DCFS hotline;**
- o **First 5 LA is funded by tobacco tax and is not in the position to fund programs as in the past. However, the work can be done through effective partnerships with others, including the County. Partnership can take many forms. First 5 LA can do a better job connecting their investment to County's priorities; and**
- o **First 5 LA is currently looking at Welcome Baby Select Home Visitation assessments to determine which moms indicate they are facing housing instability and looking for ways to connect them to Homeless Family Solution Centers that the County is bringing up. First 5 LA is trying to be more implicit and focused. They are relying on County funding and contracts to bring organizations together through facilitation and partnerships, bringing in experts and speakers, helping County departments/OCP with some of this work going forward. First 5 LA offers their support. Making these sorts of connections across providers, systems, and sectors begins to build connectivity and to enhance the system that prevents the poor outcomes that many have worked to prevent.**

Mr. Wagner thanked the Commission for including First 5 LA and looks forward to continuing to work with the Commission.

Commissioner Curry stated that there is a constant need to remind people that prevention is not DCFS' job, but the job of everybody in the County.

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Vice Chair McCroskey stated that the Commission has been essential in getting prevention to this point.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

VI. DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL

- 10.** Approval of letter of support for AB2442 - Density Bonuses for At-Risk Populations (16-3066)

On motion of Commissioner Garen, seconded by Vice Chair McCroskey, this item was approved.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

VII. MISCELLANEOUS

- 11.** Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission on item(s) of interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Commission. (16-2983)

Matt Harris, Executive Director of Project Impact, a community based agency in Lynwood and Co-Convener of the Community Child Welfare Coalition, which is a collection of approximately 50 prevention and intervention agencies throughout Los Angeles County, is in support of the countywide prevention plan presented by Judge Nash. In the coming months, they are planning their 3rd annual town hall meeting and invite the Commission's participation and support as they look for solutions to the problems of racial disparity and disproportionality in the child welfare system. He appreciates Judge Nash for addressing these problems through ERDD (Eliminating Race Disparity and Disproportionality) and recognizing this important area in the Office of Child Protection. The plan is to discuss prevention analytics versus predictive analytics, best practices that work in communities affected by racial disparity, including the review on PIDP. It is important, in these politically hostile environments that everyone is intentional about building cultural bridges, versus building walls. He encouraged the Commission to hear from faith based partners and from communities where so much hate has been directed to see what they are

doing in terms of responding to these issues of hate and disparity as it relates to Muslim, LGBT, African American and Hispanic communities, as well as API providers that are often not recognized. Mr. Harris shared a quote from Maya Angelou, “It’s time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity there is beauty and there is strength.”

- 12.** Matters not posted on the agenda, to be discussed and (if requested) placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the Commission, or matters requiring immediate action because of an emergency situation or where the need to take action arose subsequent to the posting of the agenda. (16-2981)

There were no matters presented.

- 13.** Adjournment. (16-2984)

The meeting adjourned at 11:57 a.m.